



HIGHLIGHTS OF THE U.S.-SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN TRADE AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION FORUM OCTOBER 29-30, 2001

U.S. AND AFRICAN LEADERS MEET TO DISCUSS THE AFRICAN GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

"We share the same goal – to forge a future of more openness, trade and freedom...The United States will work in partnership with African nations to help them build the institutions and expertise they need to benefit from trade."

President George W. Bush

With these words, President George W. Bush launched the first-ever U.S.-Sub-Saharan African Trade and Economic Cooperation Forum held October 29-30, 2001 at the State Department in Washington, DC, announcing two programs to help Africans sell more of their products on the global market and encouraging American investment in Africa. This historic event, attended by ministers from the 35 eligible sub-Saharan African nations, was an outgrowth of the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) signed into law in May 2000. President Bush announced the establishment of the AGOA Forum at a Rose Garden ceremony on May 16, 2001.

President Bush began his remarks by thanking the African nations for their expressions of sympathy in the wake of the September 11 attacks and expressing appreciation

for their support of the coalition against terrorism. He also noted the October 17, 2001 meeting in Dakar, Senegal which condemned terrorism and underscored Africa's commitment to join the coalition. President Bush went on to call AGOA "one of the most hopeful acts that the Congress has passed" as it provides "a road map for how the United States and Africa can tap the power of markets to improve the lives of



President Bush
addresses dele-
gates at the
AGOA Forum

Photo by Michael Gross, State Department

our citizens."

AGOA provides duty free access to the U.S. market for most products from eligible African countries. Speakers pointed to the positive results gained under AGOA as trade with Sub-Saharan Africa expanded 17 percent over last year and African exports to the U.S. reached \$11.6 billion in the first half of 2001. AGOA incentives brought an estimated \$1 billion in investment to the region and has created new jobs in various

(Continued from page 1)

industries in many African countries.

The U.S.-Sub-Saharan Trade and Development Forum looked at some success stories, examined existing obstacles, and outlined steps that the U.S. and Sub-Saharan African nations can jointly take to stimulate economic growth and trade, enhance democracy and good governance, and combat HIV/AIDS. Issues raised included ways to attract foreign investment, tackle debt, the need for grants versus loans, improving American perceptions of Africa, and arranging training workshops to ease market access for African products.

Ghanaian Minister of Trade Dr. Kofi Apraku highlighted the importance of holding this Forum saying: "We live in a difficult, competitive and complicated world today. While the potential for success is great, that for failure is even greater. It is thus right that we should gather [in Washington] to find ways to positively enhance our commercial linkages with the U.S. especially and with each other."

There was a clear recognition of the importance of the private sector. Secretary of State Powell affirmed that "while good governance is essential to creating the conditions needed

for entrepreneurship and investment to flourish, it is the private sector, in this case

businesses run by hardworking people in America and Africa, which makes development and well-being sustainable."

In response, Senegalese Foreign Minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio discussed the New Partnership for African Development, which emerged from a recent summit among 15 African heads of state in Abuja, Nigeria and said that Africa was looking for new partners and investors. He acknowledged the need for a paradigm shift as "Africa wants to change its approach to development with strong new concepts that cast the private sector—African and international—as the driving force of African development...AGOA is good for Africa. Let us hope for its rapid extension to our entire continent."

On the second day, after the plenary sessions, the African delegates proceeded to Capitol Hill for a luncheon addressed by Congressman, J. C. Watts and sponsored by the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the Export-Import Bank and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency.

African Ministers listen to presentations during the AGOA Forum. Sessions were translated into French and Portuguese.



Photo by Ann Thompson

They met with congressional leaders including House International Relations Committee Chairman Henry Hyde and House African Subcommittee Chairman Ed Royce.

Royce commended the African diplomatic corps for their help in developing and passing AGOA and said that AGOA has been a “real success” as trade is up and badly needed jobs are being created. AGOA, according to Royce, has also “encouraged valuable economic and commercial reform” which has attracted foreign investment.

The Lesotho Minister of Industry, Trade and Marketing Mpho Meli Malie expressed the sentiments of many of his African colleagues when he said, “We have viewed AGOA as a ray of hope – an initiative that is there to assist

us to pull ourselves up by the bootstraps, a window of empowerment, a window of opportunity for job creation and poverty alleviation, a vehicle for attraction of foreign direct investments through the lucrative market access opportunities that it affords.”

US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick summarized the Forum well when he said, “This forum sends a message to the world that U.S. commitment to prosperity and freedom in Sub-Saharan Africa is solid, our conviction is strong and our partnership vibrant. AGOA is a gift, an opportunity we must seize, to open U.S. markets for Africa, open African markets for Americans, and open our societies and people to one another through a positive agency of economic empowerment, opportunity and hope.”



Photo by Ann Thompson, State Department



Ambassador Zoellick leads discussion about U.S.-Africa trade issues with Forum delegates

AGOA FORUM ANNOUNCEMENTS

President George W. Bush announced the following three initiatives on October 29:

- U.S. Trade and Development Agency to establish Sub-Saharan Regional Trade Office in Johannesburg
- OPIC Sub-Saharan Support Facility created with \$200 million line of credit
- Trade for African Development and Enterprise Program to establish regional hubs for global competitiveness

USTR Robert Zoellick signed two agreements on October 30:

- U.S.-Nigerian Joint Declaration on Electronic Commerce
- Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) between the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the U.S. — the first TIFA between the U.S. and Sub-Saharan Africa

FORUM SCHEDULE

- 1st Plenary:** Implementation of AGOA and Strategies to Expand Trade
Co-chairs: US Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick
Lesotho's Minister of Industry, Trade and Marketing Mpho Meli Malie
- 2nd Plenary:** US African Outcome, Administration Directions
Co-chairs: US Secretary of State Colin Powell
Senegal's Minister of Foreign Affairs Cheikh Tidiane Gadio
- 3rd Plenary:** Strengthening Commercial Linkages
Co-chairs: US Secretary of Commerce Donald Evans
Ghana's Minister of Trade and Industry Kofi K. Apraku
- 4th Plenary:** Sound Policies
Co-chairs: US Secretary of Treasury Paul H. O'Neill
Mauritius' Minister of Industry, Commerce and International Trade
Jaya Krishna Cuttaree
- 5th Plenary:** HIV/AIDs
Co-chairs: US Agency for International Development Director Andrew Natsios
Ethiopia's Minister of Trade and Industry Kassahun Ayele
- Presentation:** Coalition Building by National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice

USEFUL WEBSITES: Full Texts of Speeches and Other AGOA Information

President Bush:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011029-2.html>

Secretary Powell:

<http://www.state.gov.secretary/rm/2001/index.cfm?docid=5780>

Secretary O'Neill:

<http://www.treas.gov/press/releases/po740.htm>

USTR Zoellick:

<http://www.ustr.gov/releases/2001/10/01-90.htm>

AGOA General Website:

<http://www.agoa.gov>

AGOA Fact Sheet:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/10/20011029.html>

USAID Fact Sheet on Trade for African Development and Enterprise Program:

<http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2001/fs011107.htm>

AGOA Forum Final Statement:

<http://usinfo.state.gov/admin/009/aef401.htm>

OPIC Sub-Saharan Support Facility Fact Sheet:

<http://www.opic.gov/PressReleases/2001/1-42.htm>

Press Release TDA to establish Africa Regional Trade Office:

http://www.tda.gov/trade/press/Oct29_01.html

Presented by the Office of Public Diplomacy, Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. State Department